TREYF

A PODCAST ABOUT JEWISH POLITICS

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Podcast

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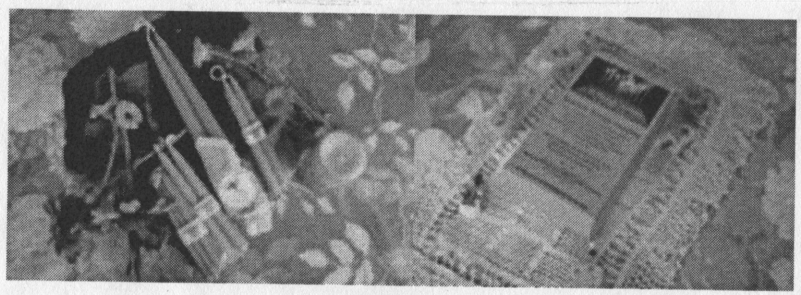
decolonization

Decolonization

This is the third issue of *Doykeit*, a submission-based zine project that seeks to speak to the cross-sections of Jewish and queer/feminist identification and how these might inform an anti-Zionist or Palestinian solidarity politic. The concept of 'doykeit,' Yiddish for 'hereness,' is taken from the pre-World War II Polish-Jewish group, the Bund, which believed that Jews have both a right and a political commitment to live and work for change 'here and now'.

All of the issues of *Doykeit* have asked contributors and readers to think about relationships to place and space. *Doykeit* in our reading is not about ownership but about cultivating home, about responsibility to community, about solidarity across and through distance and identification. The theme of the second issue, *Diaspora*, contends with the idea that Jews were dispersed from somewhere— questioning the mythology of Palestine as the ancestral homeland of European Jews and thinking about the violent dispersion from Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries. The issue deals with what it means to be a diasporist or a diaspora Jew; about movement through space; what "home" means in a world organized around states, citizenship, and ownership. The tension between doykeit, diaspora, and decolonization is a productive one—to be rootless and to put down roots, to return stolen land while struggling with the constrained choices of our ancestors and investing in the idea that the land could sustain all of us.

This conversation, in the "Decolonization" issue of *Doykeit,* starts from a place of Jewish Palestine solidarity, and with an important reminder that the practice and driving principle of decolonization is not just about Palestine. Frankly, a lot of white people who do Palestine solidarity work in the U.S., Canada, and Australia (where almost all of our contributors and readers are from) forget or ignore that we're settlers here.



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https://www.facebook.com/donate/1015376550570549 3/

Research Indigenous life and issues in your region and get involved.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

LINKS

Sogorea Te Land Trust - an Indigenous Women's urban collective in California

Native Women Speak, Fusion Video

Issues Facing Native Americans, Huffington Post Article

BOOKS

An Indigenous People's' History of the United States, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Beacon Press, 2014

The Militarization of Indian Country (Makwa Enewed), Winona LaDuke, Michigan State University Press, 2013

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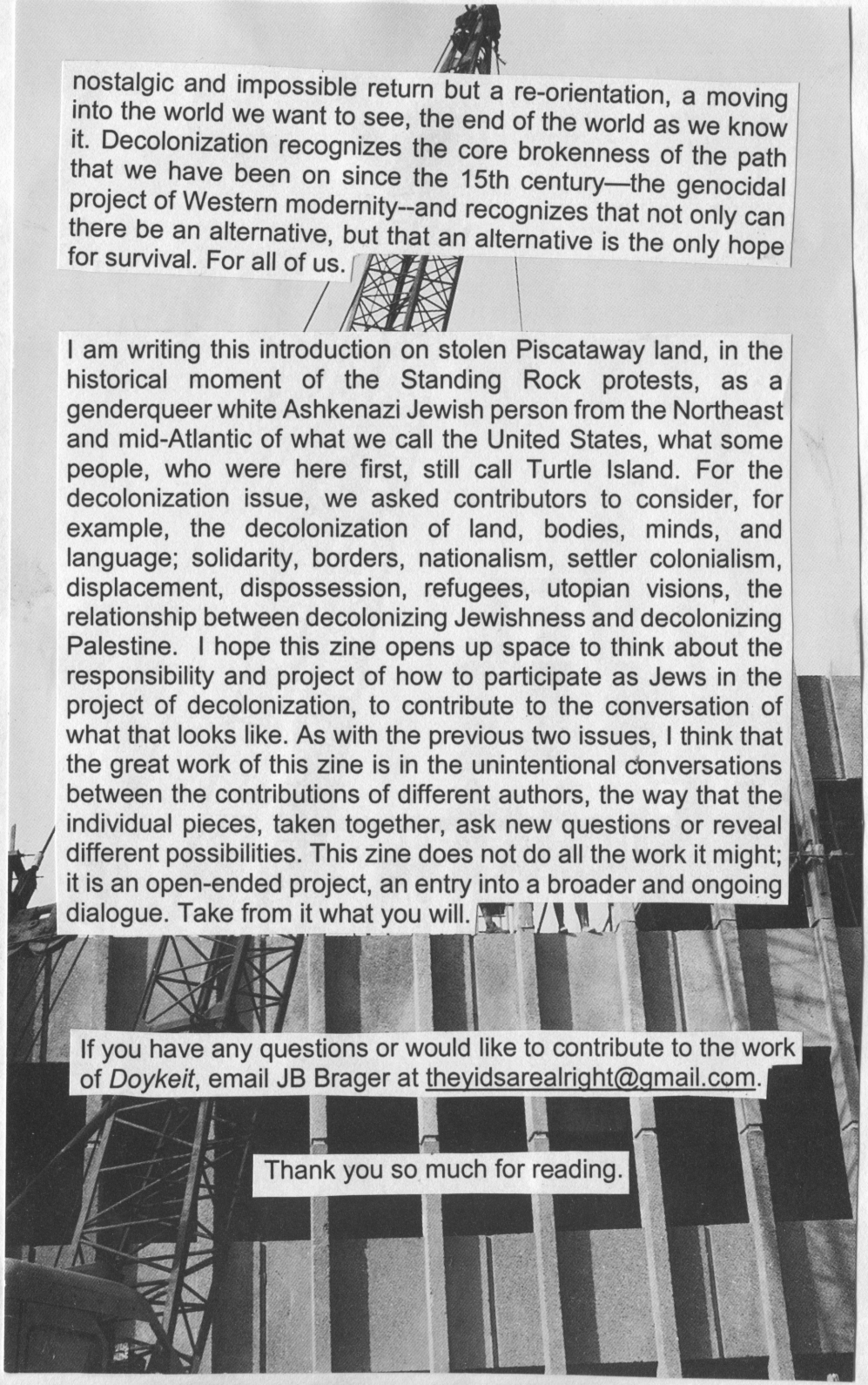
The Sukkot pledge, evolved in the context of Rabbi Lynn's Jewish solidarity work in New Mexico, Nevada, Minnesota and California in response to Indigenous calls to protect sacred sites, keep nuclear & industrial waste off indigenous lands and respect Native sovereignty, culture and history. With special thanks to Quana Walker, Michelle Cook, Kathy Sanchez, Corrina Gould and the S.A.G.E. Council of N.M.

For many Jews on colonized land, this may be a new realization, that when we talk about colonization it is not spatially or temporally distant from us. Colonization is an active process that is not over and done with. The genocide of indigenous people is ongoing in the places we write from—the idea that one could have arrived in this country "after" the genocide of indigenous people was over and done with erases the existence, struggle, and lived reality of indigenous people today. The reality of settler colonialism is masked by the mythology of empty land, or that the safety of some is predicated on the removal of others. This remains true: those of us with no indigenous relationship to the land we live on--we are always already settlers.

This may feel particularly complicated for Jews who have been refugees or have family histories of escape, or for Jews whose ancestors were brought here without choice, especially through the violence of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The privilege of settler status is further complicated by structural racism— what does it mean to be a non-white settler in a white supremacist settler colonial society? We have a shared responsibility as settlers to be active participants and co-conspirators in the process of dismantling the world we profit from, to be in solidarity with indigenous peoples while addressing racism in our struggles and in our communities, and recognizing the particular responsibility of white people to combat racism, in Jewish community and in our broader society.

Decolonization goes beyond the inadequate practice of performing apology, which is predicated on the idea that colonization is over and done with, and that there is nothing that we can or should do about it. Decolonization as a practical project is about indigenous sovereignty, and it is also about gentrification, asylum, reparations, extractive capitalism, environmental sustainability. Decolonization must center those most affected, but it is a project for all of us, that is, not a



nostalgic and impossible return but a re-orientation, a moving into the world we want to see, the end of the world as we know it. Decolonization recognizes the core brokenness of the path that we have been on since the 15th century—the genocidal project of Western modernity--and recognizes that not only can there be an alternative, but that an alternative is the only hope for survival. For all of us.

I am writing this introduction on stolen Piscataway land, in the historical moment of the Standing Rock protests, as a genderqueer white Ashkenazi Jewish person from the Northeast and mid-Atlantic of what we call the United States, what some people, who were here first, still call Turtle Island. For the decolonization issue, we asked contributors to consider, for example, the decolonization of land, bodies, minds, and language; solidarity, borders, nationalism, settler colonialism, displacement, dispossession, refugees, utopian visions, the relationship between decolonizing Jewishness and decolonizing Palestine. I hope this zine opens up space to think about the responsibility and project of how to participate as Jews in the project of decolonization, to contribute to the conversation of what that looks like. As with the previous two issues, I think that the great work of this zine is in the unintentional conversations between the contributions of different authors, the way that the individual pieces, taken together, ask new questions or reveal different possibilities. This zine does not do all the work it might; it is an open-ended project, an entry into a broader and ongoing dialogue. Take from it what you will.

If you have any questions or would like to contribute to the work of *Doykeit*, email JB Brager at theyidsarealright@gmail.com.

Thank you so much for reading.

Sukkot* Pledge to Respect and Protect Indigenous People, Land, Water and Sacred Sites

IN RESPONSE TO THE CALL FROM STANDING ROCK

The Talmud contains a practice: strive not to benefit or profit from the fruits of violence. In the United States, European settlers have built their houses on stolen land and enjoy the fruits of violence without having paid reparations or halted policies of displacement and destruction. **

When Jewish people build sukkot in North America, how do we enter a process of restorative justice for the unhealed wound of genocide and mass displacement inflicted upon indigenous peoples by colonial settlers to Turtle Island, the indigenous name for North America, over a five hundred year period?

From Oakland to Standing Rock and all across Indian Country, Indigenous people are waging a beautiful struggle against ongoing destruction of lands long sacred to them, and the assault on Indian lives. As Standing Rock proclaimed, "We will not rest until our lands, people, waters and sacred sites are permanently protected..."

In light of the five hundred year history of broken promises and treaties, Jewish people living in North America are invited to make this pledge while sitting in the Sukkah in this hemisphere, on Turtle Island for the sake of restorative justice:

1. We pledge to protect/shomeret Turtle Island sacred sites including burial grounds, rock art, ceremonial sites and villages, and all lands which native peoples deem as sacred, upon request from the Native peoples' and according to the way the struggle is articulated by them. We promise to follow through for the long haul.

2. We pledge to "honor Native peoples as keepers of the land. Native governments and their law must be kept and enforced. Indian treaties and status as original nations must be recognized to heal. Any solution must restore Native jurisdiction within International law and restore power to the mothers and women of Native territories." (Michelle Cook Dine Human Rights Advocate)

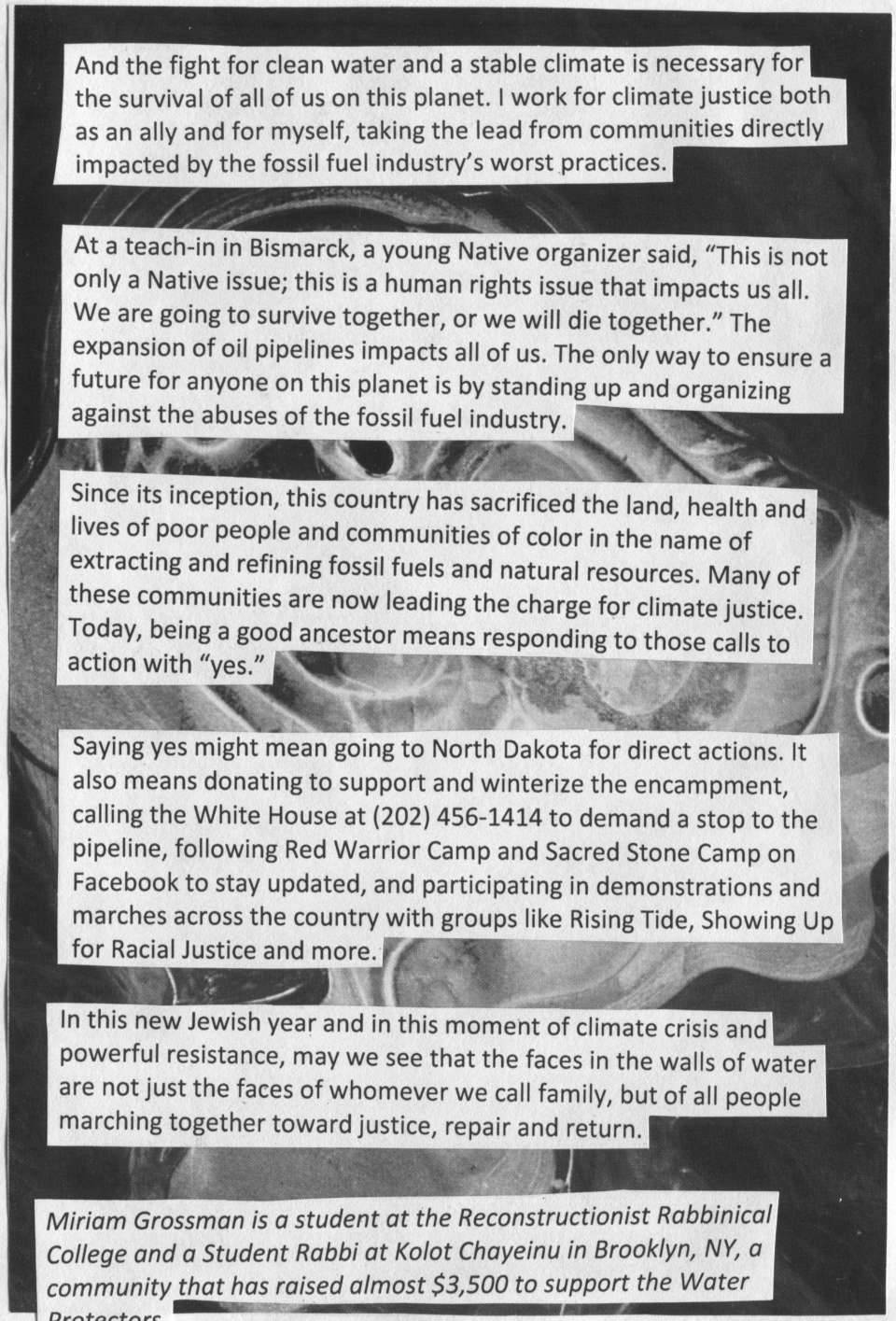
3. We pledge to strive to be good allies, committed to a truthful examination of attitudes, beliefs and behaviors in our own traditions that contribute to sustaining structural violence that harms Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island.

4. When Native people from Turtle Island choose to share certain aspects of their culture, it is not an invitation to take or use their traditional ways for one's own purposes. We strive to avoid cultural appropriation.

5. In honoring Native people from Turtle Island, let us respect the dignity and right of peoples not to share certain aspects of their tradition and to hold them sacred to their own community. We honor the 'permission protocols' of each Indigenous community and tribe.

6. We pledge to Idle No More so that we can enjoy the fruits of Sukkot and the blessings of justice upon the land. We pledge to raise awareness in our Jewish community and to encourage our community to donate to funds that directly support the Water Protectors.

*Sukkot is a Jewish fall harvest festival
** Yerushalmi 115b is one example of many citations



And the fight for clean water and a stable climate is necessary for the survival of all of us on this planet. I work for climate justice both as an ally and for myself, taking the lead from communities directly impacted by the fossil fuel industry's worst practices.

At a teach-in in Bismarck, a young Native organizer said, "This is not only a Native issue; this is a human rights issue that impacts us all. We are going to survive together, or we will die together." The expansion of oil pipelines impacts all of us. The only way to ensure a future for anyone on this planet is by standing up and organizing against the abuses of the fossil fuel industry.

Since its inception, this country has sacrificed the land, health and lives of poor people and communities of color in the name of extracting and refining fossil fuels and natural resources. Many of these communities are now leading the charge for climate justice. Today, being a good ancestor means responding to those calls to action with "yes."

Saying yes might mean going to North Dakota for direct actions. It also means donating to support and winterize the encampment, calling the White House at (202) 456-1414 to demand a stop to the pipeline, following Red Warrior Camp and Sacred Stone Camp on Facebook to stay updated, and participating in demonstrations and marches across the country with groups like Rising Tide, Showing Up for Racial Justice and more.

In this new Jewish year and in this moment of climate crisis and powerful resistance, may we see that the faces in the walls of water are not just the faces of whomever we call family, but of all people marching together toward justice, repair and return.

Miriam Grossman is a student at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and a Student Rabbi at Kolot Chayeinu in Brooklyn, NY, a community that has raised almost $3,500 to support the Water Protectors.

Transcribed from a recording Summer 2016

good morning, abby -

it's about 7:30 and i'm sitting at the goodwill parking lot in san jose, about to start my day on the route for the mobile farmers' market. wanted to leave you with some words, responding to your request for validation and affirmation as you venture east to see your family.

first off, just to say how honored i am to be asked and how brave it is to ask. so thank you for that honor. thank you for prompting this reflection, something that i rarely seek out. and a couple things came to mind.

the first is that i immediately wanted it to be an audio recording. something about the voice, that it just permeates, at least for me, a little more deeply than reading can or in a different way. and, i'd like to have it also be some kind of grounding you can do if you want because with my family, really similarly in some regards to what you said about yours, i can feel really isolated being home and unsettled by how it is no longer my home and also will always be my home. and how i am of these people, my family of origin, and also feel so innately not, viscerally not.

so with those things in mind, i invite you to put one hand over your heart and one hand on your belly. close or lower your eyes, and you're either welcome to stand or sit, just find your feet connected to the ground. noticing the weight of your feet moving down into the earth, all four corners of your feet. how maybe the weight is carried differently on one foot than the other. the feeling of your chest, maybe even down into your low belly, the air rising and falling with your breath. holding space for your body, in its quietness or loudness, whatever it is speaking to you right now.

and when you wrote me, immediately also a song came to mind. and i invite you if you want, either now or in the future to be held in song. i was thinking:

elohai neshama shenatata bi tehora hee
elohai neshama shenatata bi tehora hee
elohai neshama shenatata bi tehora hee

you're welcome to open your eyes if you were still following along there with that.

i think i just want to let you know that ancestry is complex. especially right now in my unlearning process, there's so much implicit betrayal happening- being raised with zionism, interlocked with ashkenazi and more broadly white supremacist conditioning, in the liberal setting of my family. and that interwinned with cis-ness and straight-ness connected to aspirations for middle class and ultimately an owning class lifestyle.

just try to notice what comes up.

for me the first feeling that often comes is this sense of shame. that not only am i not doing things the way my family was hoping for me, i'm also not on a stable path i can call my own. and increasingly instead of having a feeling of shame, it's this movement outwards in anger. i read both the shame and anger as very valid responses to the violence of the cultures we were raised in, those elements reliant on white supremacy, zionism, and colonial capitalism. inwards towards shame and outwards in anger. both of those things are valid and it can feel really hard.

when i'm with my family of origin, and what i hope for you with your family, is that you allow for shame or anger or feelings of disconnection, and that you notice those things and in those moments,
i encourage you to focus on yourself.

i'd invite you to say prayers of loving-kindness for yourself. just hold some ritual practice and kindness for yourself during this time. honoring all the ways that this present moment is a portal and deeply interconnected and woven into the past and future, all the possibilies that lie in loving yourself in a culture that really doesn't want us to. so i invite you to create your own practice, and i'll share mine, in the spirit that it might offer some relevance to you. and i invite you to also say it out loud. for me there's a power in that, even just quietly, in saying it aloud to yourself:

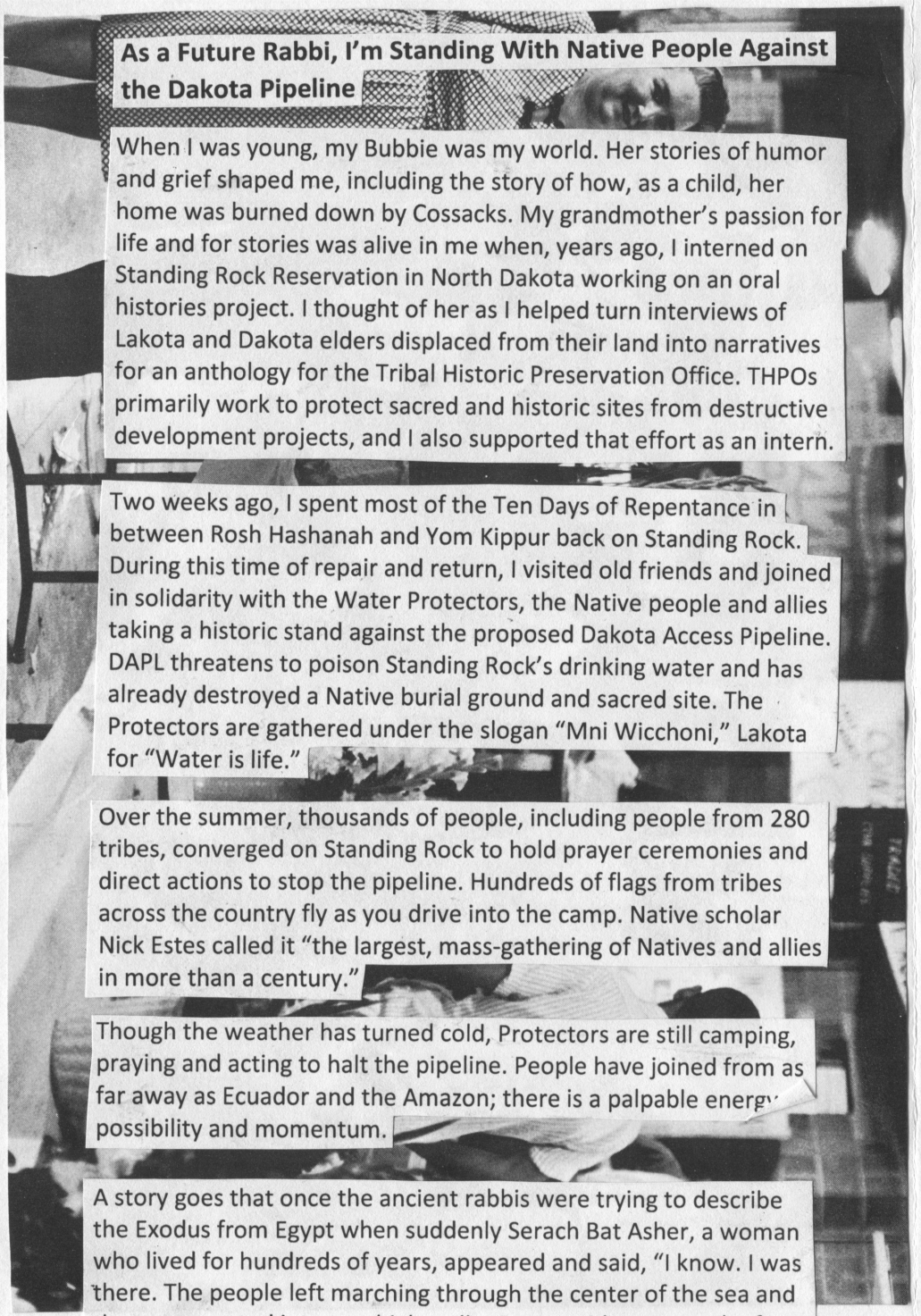
of all the generations that had come before us and on the other side we saw all the generations that would come after us. We saw them all, generations of people marching together, enlivened and liberated through water."

I imagined those walls of water as I camped with the Water Protectors between the Cannonball and Missouri Rivers. Under the vast and bright North Dakota sky, I marveled at a place that we as a country risk destroying in the name of oil. There, I felt the witnessing eyes of my ancestors and my descendants in the struggle for a more just world.

When I learned that the Enbridge Corporation bulldozed a Native gravesite with no consequences from the government, I saw my Bubbie, a pogrom survivor, a memory keeper. I asked her once, "Do you ever want to go back to Romania?" She answered, "Our family is buried in Europe. But even the graves are gone now. I don't ever want to go back." When Bubbie died she took with her the last living link to the world of my ancestors, her village. Its graves and holy places are gone. Our family connection to that place was severed. When people on Standing Rock talk about the destruction of graves, I hear Bubbie mourning how we are cut off from our ancestors. I feel called to help stop this desecration from happening today to people I love on Standing Rock.

My Bubbie's story is with me. She is with me. My friends on Standing Rock would tell you their ancestors are there with them. I am taking my Bubbie into this movement, even though while she was alive, from her own place of trauma, she did not entirely understand why I went to intern on Standing Rock. I am still taking her with me. I am redeeming for myself the memory of those in my family who were too hurt too see beyond their own experiences.

And here is where I try to see beyond *my* own experiences. Non-Native folks, especially white folks like me, must understand that this is a Native-led movement. Native communities have suffered (and persisted) under the brutal hand of settler-colonialism and environmental racism for centuries. This is a historic moment of Native empowerment and resilience.



As a Future Rabbi, I'm Standing With Native People Against the Dakota Pipeline

When I was young, my Bubbie was my world. Her stories of humor and grief shaped me, including the story of how, as a child, her home was burned down by Cossacks. My grandmother's passion for life and for stories was alive in me when, years ago, I interned on Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota working on an oral histories project. I thought of her as I helped turn interviews of Lakota and Dakota elders displaced from their land into narratives for an anthology for the Tribal Historic Preservation Office. THPOs primarily work to protect sacred and historic sites from destructive development projects, and I also supported that effort as an intern.

Two weeks ago, I spent most of the Ten Days of Repentance in between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur back on Standing Rock. During this time of repair and return, I visited old friends and joined in solidarity with the Water Protectors, the Native people and allies taking a historic stand against the proposed Dakota Access Pipeline. DAPL threatens to poison Standing Rock's drinking water and has already destroyed a Native burial ground and sacred site. The Protectors are gathered under the slogan "Mni Wicchoni," Lakota for "Water is life."

Over the summer, thousands of people, including people from 280 tribes, converged on Standing Rock to hold prayer ceremonies and direct actions to stop the pipeline. Hundreds of flags from tribes across the country fly as you drive into the camp. Native scholar Nick Estes called it "the largest, mass-gathering of Natives and allies in more than a century."

Though the weather has turned cold, Protectors are still camping, praying and acting to halt the pipeline. People have joined from as far away as Ecuador and the Amazon; there is a palpable energy possibility and momentum.

A story goes that once the ancient rabbis were trying to describe the Exodus from Egypt when suddenly Serach Bat Asher, a woman who lived for hundreds of years, appeared and said, "I know. I was there. The people left marching through the center of the sea and the water parted into two high walls. On one side we saw the faces

may i be safe and protected
may i be happy
may i be healthy and strong
may i be held in love
honoring my place in the web of life

even if i can't always feel it or access it, i offer it up as a prayer to the universe. holding that my body is so much a body of the world, constantly changing, constantly interacting with the world. that my life is so much bigger than my own singular knowing of it.

and in relation to that, remember that we are in a lineage, a long line of jewish people, of queers, creating every day a more liberated and healed world.

and so in that spirit, i just wish you so much love and care in this time. and please give me a call if you want to talk. thank you for being in my life. wishing you safe travels today, and hoping that the nourishment of the bright greenness and aliveness of the midwest right now, alongside some really grounding lake time, stirs your spirit and offers you both a rooting and a rising.

—Jay Tzvia

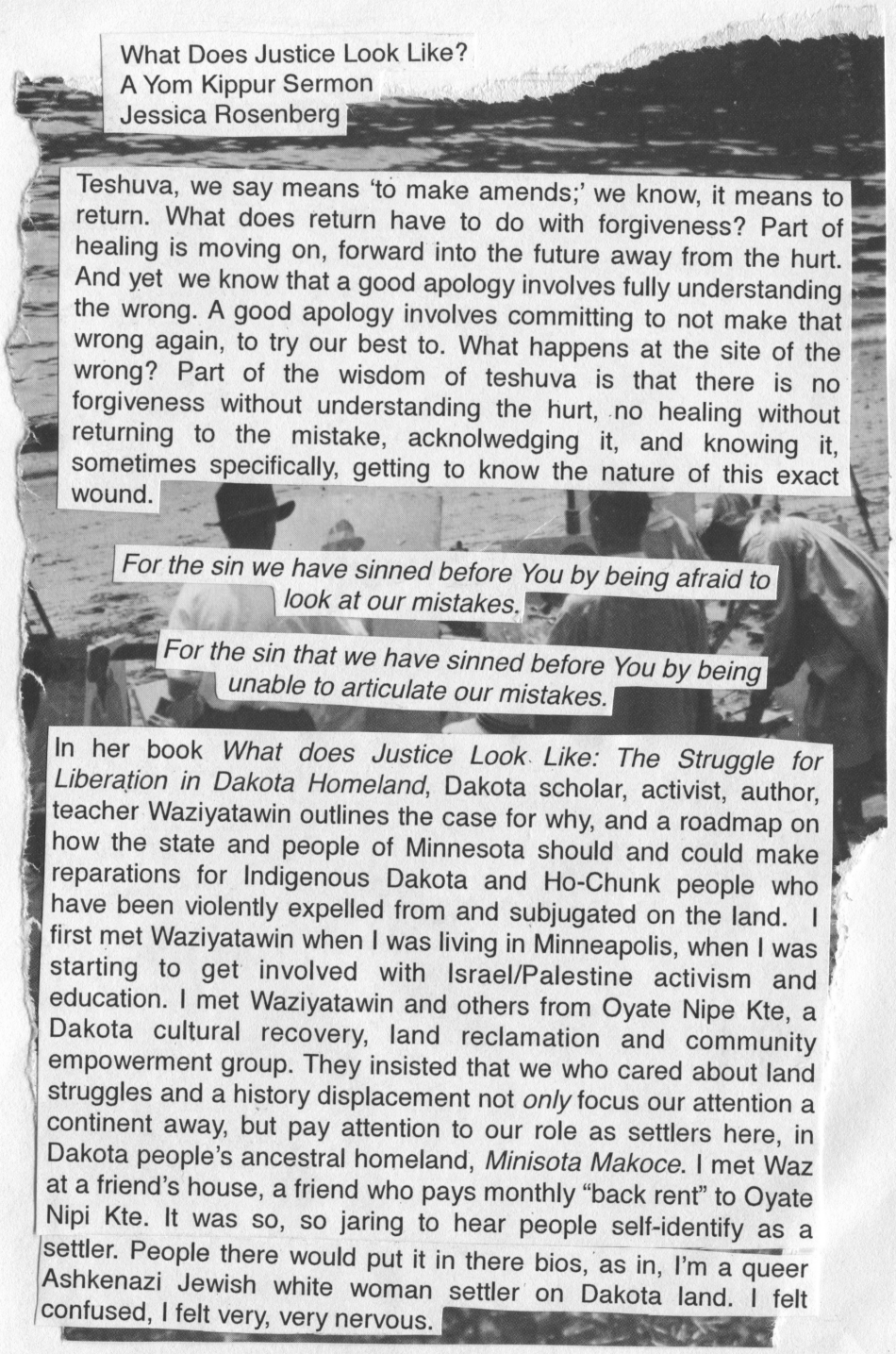
Song of the Mother

Oh, woe is me,
The potatoes and onions
Are spoiled, I will have
to wait another month for soup
My children cannot eat.

(tyler vile)

Lid fun di Farmatert Muter

Oy, vey iz mir!
di kartofl aun tsebeles
zanen gefoylt, ikh vel
hobn tsu vartn biz
vayter khodesh far zup.
Mein kinder kenen nit esn.



What Does Justice Look Like?
A Yom Kippur Sermon
Jessica Rosenberg

Teshuva, we say means 'to make amends;' we know, it means to return. What does return have to do with forgiveness? Part of healing is moving on, forward into the future away from the hurt. And yet we know that a good apology involves fully understanding the wrong. A good apology involves committing to not make that wrong again, to try our best to. What happens at the site of the wrong? Part of the wisdom of teshuva is that there is no forgiveness without understanding the hurt, no healing without returning to the mistake, acknolwedging it, and knowing it, sometimes specifically, getting to know the nature of this exact wound.

For the sin we have sinned before You by being afraid to look at our mistakes.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by being unable to articulate our mistakes.

In her book *What does Justice Look Like: The Struggle for Liberation in Dakota Homeland*, Dakota scholar, activist, author, teacher Waziyatawin outlines the case for why, and a roadmap on how the state and people of Minnesota should and could make reparations for Indigenous Dakota and Ho-Chunk people who have been violently expelled from and subjugated on the land. I first met Waziyatawin when I was living in Minneapolis, when I was starting to get involved with Israel/Palestine activism and education. I met Waziyatawin and others from Oyate Nipe Kte, a Dakota cultural recovery, land reclamation and community empowerment group. They insisted that we who cared about land struggles and a history displacement not *only* focus our attention a continent away, but pay attention to our role as settlers here, in Dakota people's ancestral homeland, *Minisota Makoce*. I met Waz at a friend's house, a friend who pays monthly "back rent" to Oyate Nipi Kte. It was so, so jaring to hear people self-identify as a settler. People there would put it in there bios, as in, I'm a queer Ashkenazi Jewish white woman settler on Dakota land. I felt confused, I felt very, very nervous.

I went to Hebrew school in a teeny shul that was slowly dying as all the kids moved to Sharon or Newton. There were about 7 kids total. I was eight, and they showed us clips from Schindler's List. I remember the raid, and the gunshots. Blood on the ground. I go home, climb the stairs, and hug my mother. Dad's not home.

I became more observant when I moved to Washington, D.C. and discovered queer Jewish communities where my partner and I can hold hands. Where people sing loudly and believe in Gd, kind of, like I kind of do. And where we talk about the occupation and Palestine and Black Lives Matter and how Ashkenazim became white.

I read Judaism ≠ Israel and is The Holocaust is Over, We Must Rise from Its Ashes. About how the Holocaust has taken over Judaism like a plague. Every new threat is Hitler again, and we give our children our genes and our traumas along with our songs and our Kiddush cups.

I have long conversations with a good friend (Jewish) who studies Middle Eastern politics and Arabic. We agree that this Jewish state isn't the one we want, if we want one at all (probably not). I don't want to live in Israel. I will never want to live there.

The editors of Keep Your Wives Away from Them: An Anthology of Writing by and About Orthodykes come to the JCC. In a warbly grandmotherly voice, one of them proclaims that Moshe Ben Maimon's medieval North Africa was *the golden age of Jewish lesbianism*

I am a queer Jewish American woman. Creating a meaningful Jewish life for myself here and now invigorates me. I have my grandmother's menorah and her candlesticks. I have the niguns I have learned. And I understand that my father's worldview (and that of the AIPACs of the world) does not have to be mine.

****

Gd appeared to Moshe in the desert, a twisting tree of fire. Gd called out Moshe, Moshe! And Moshe said, **Hineini**, here I am. Here I am.

Hineini

By Shoshana Daniyt

My father and I spent a lot of time in the car together when I was little. He was a hard-core yard-saler. We would go to intersections in our little town in suburban Massachusetts where I grew up, looking for signs pointing us in the right direction. And we would root through other people's lives. Their trash, their toys, their kids' toys, their record collections. And Dad would buy cobalt-blue vases, or little statues, or pick out a record for me (we both liked 60's folk, but our tastes diverged from there).

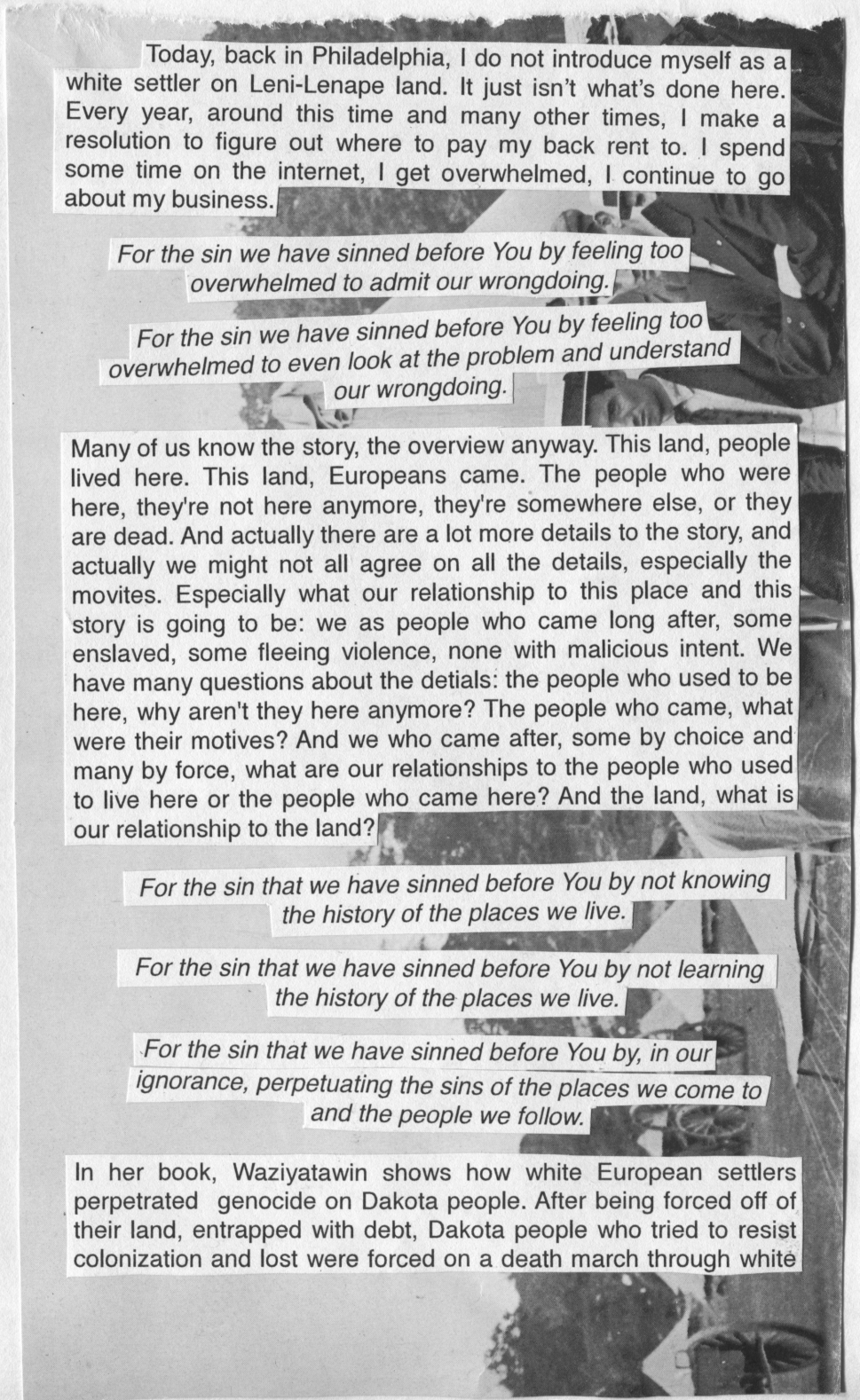
My father's house is filled to the brim. He's a hoarder, textbook case. When I was in therapy for depression, my therapist recommended I watch the show "Hoarders" as if looking at a mirror would make me feel better. (It didn't.) I lived in fear that my father would pass away (Gd forbid) and make me singlehandedly clean out his house.

Somewhere in the house (probably in the basement) is a collection of nazi medals. With the eagles, and the swastikas, and the red ribbons. I don't like to look at them, I pretend they aren't there. Lurking. "They tried to wipe us out," said my father. "They were going to make a museum of our relics. They called it The Museum of Extinct Peoples." I look away.

On Birthright, I went to Yad Vashem and picked up a book for my father called Rethinking the Holocaust. I never gave it to him.

My father was very young when news about the Holocaust broke in America—he was born in 1940. (I'm a late in life child). Those images never left him. They live behind his eyes. The smokestacks. The prison uniforms. Work macht frei. He tells me this while we drive. How Hitler came to power. How his friend Avrum was fifteen and held captive by German soldiers during the war. "They were nice to Avrum," he said.

My father does not pray, except at funerals, maybe. He does not go to shul. If his girlfriend and her family make a seder, he might go. (I'm not around to make one for him.) For him, Judaism is a tomb, a monument. A looking back.



Today, back in Philadelphia, I do not introduce myself as a white settler on Leni-Lenape land. It just isn't what's done here. Every year, around this time and many other times, I make a resolution to figure out where to pay my back rent to. I spend some time on the internet, I get overwhelmed, I continue to go about my business.

For the sin we have sinned before You by feeling too overwhelmed to admit our wrongdoing.

For the sin we have sinned before You by feeling too overwhelmed to even look at the problem and understand our wrongdoing.

Many of us know the story, the overview anyway. This land, people lived here. This land, Europeans came. The people who were here, they're not here anymore, they're somewhere else, or they are dead. And actually there are a lot more details to the story, and actually we might not all agree on all the details, especially the movites. Especially what our relationship to this place and this story is going to be: we as people who came long after, some enslaved, some fleeing violence, none with malicious intent. We have many questions about the detials: the people who used to be here, why aren't they here anymore? The people who came, what were their motives? And we who came after, some by choice and many by force, what are our relationships to the people who used to live here or the people who came here? And the land, what is our relationship to the land?

For the sin that we have sinned before You by not knowing the history of the places we live.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by not learning the history of the places we live.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by, in our ignorance, perpetuating the sins of the places we come to and the people we follow.

In her book, Waziyatawin shows how white European settlers perpetrated genocide on Dakota people. After being forced off of their land, entrapped with debt, Dakota people who tried to resist colonization and lost were forced on a death march through white

towns, to Fort Snelling. There they were held in a concentration camp from 1862-1863. Fort Snelling is now a tourist attraction, where historical reenactors recreate life in Fort Snelling conveniently frozen in the 1820's, so that there is need to mention ethnic cleansing.

Given this history, what would it mean to return? What would it mean to repair?

For the sin that we have sinned before You by refusing to admit the harm that was perpetrated.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by actively covering up the harm that was perpetrated.

For the sin we have sinned before You by being afraid to rock the boat.

I grew up in Pennsylvania, I went to a Quaker school, and we learned all about how William Penn and the early Quakers were a different kind of settler, a different kind of colonizer, very friendly to the Leni-Lenape people who were here. And yet, today, there are no state recognized tribes in Pennsylvania, there are no federally recognized tribes in Pennsylvania, there is no land held collectively by Native Americans in Pennsylvania. The original people of this land fled to what is now Oklahoma, to what is now Kansas, to Canada, to New Jersey, to Delaware. Those who remain in Pennsylvania and claim connection to "unrecognized" nations are not eligible for scholarships or government benefits reserved for Native Americans. Though, in the 2000 census, there were 18,000 American Indians living in the state, officially, there are no American Indian tribes in the state.

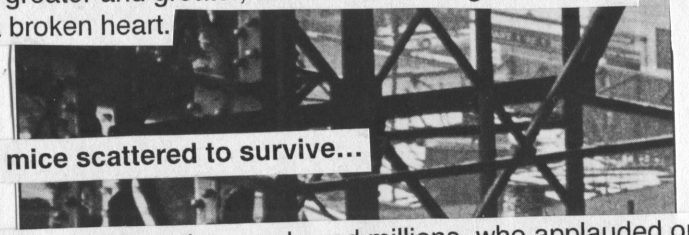
How do you repair a relationship with someone who you don't know, won't acknowledge, can't see?

For the sin that we have sinned before You by failing to admit wrongdoing.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by lack of creative problem solving.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by failing to even try to make it right.

The violence did not subside. The people of earth turned away from the Earth and the Moon and worshiped the Sun and all of its power. The power of the Sun was so great that it ripped the Moon and the Earth apart. Seeing this, all of the animals of the Moon wept and ran towards the Moon, and leapt and climbed upon the departing body. The *mayz* people ran, being pursued by the earth people, but were too late. In a moment of grief, as the Sun pulled the Moon further and further away, the Moon cast a spell on the *mayz* people, turning them into mice in hopes of aiding their survival. To this day, the Moon and the Earth, having been torn from one another, plead with the Sun, but to no avail. And the Moon sings to the Earth pulling tides and blankets of sky apart to see all the beauty of the Earth and the scar of what they once had, and to look upon the lost *mayz* people. And to this day the *mayz* people sing songs of longing and sorrow to the Moon and, like two ships signaling at sea, the Moon responds, waxing and waning. Now, every year the distance between the Moon and the Earth grows greater and greater, for there is nothing more whole than a broken heart.



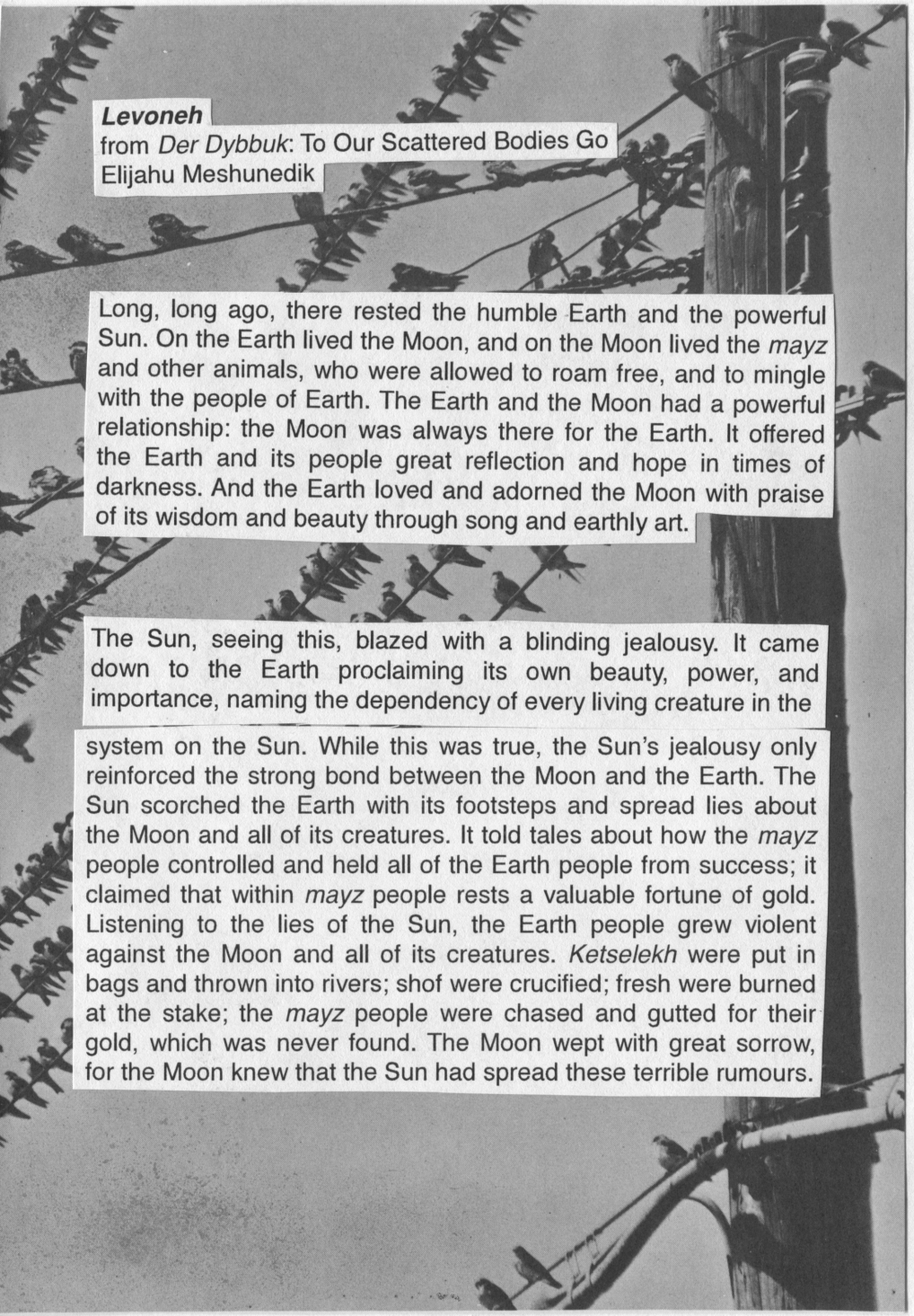
The mice scattered to survive...

"They who did this to thousands and millions, who applauded or allowed it to happen, shall they not pay?" (Cohen 201) They have forgotten that time, but we have not. We move beyond The Pale:

the Pale of starvation, of restriction, of violence. Their Pale, their cosmos, is our nightmare. We yearn for what is beyond the Pale, the safety of their unknown.

Yet...

Levoneh (לעוואָנע) is Yiddish for "moon." From the Hebrew (לְבָנָה)
Ketsel (קעצל) is Yiddish for "kitten." *Ketselekh* is the diminutive.
Shof (שאָף) is Yiddish for "sheep"
Fresh (פרעשׁ) is Yiddish for "frogs"
Mayz (מײַז) is the plural form of mouse *moyz* ((מויז



Levoneh
from *Der Dybbuk*: To Our Scattered Bodies Go
Elijahu Meshunedik

Long, long ago, there rested the humble Earth and the powerful Sun. On the Earth lived the Moon, and on the Moon lived the *mayz* and other animals, who were allowed to roam free, and to mingle with the people of Earth. The Earth and the Moon had a powerful relationship: the Moon was always there for the Earth. It offered the Earth and its people great reflection and hope in times of darkness. And the Earth loved and adorned the Moon with praise of its wisdom and beauty through song and earthly art.

The Sun, seeing this, blazed with a blinding jealousy. It came down to the Earth proclaiming its own beauty, power, and importance, naming the dependency of every living creature in the system on the Sun. While this was true, the Sun's jealousy only reinforced the strong bond between the Moon and the Earth. The Sun scorched the Earth with its footsteps and spread lies about the Moon and all of its creatures. It told tales about how the *mayz* people controlled and held all of the Earth people from success; it claimed that within *mayz* people rests a valuable fortune of gold. Listening to the lies of the Sun, the Earth people grew violent against the Moon and all of its creatures. *Ketselekh* were put in bags and thrown into rivers; shof were crucified; fresh were burned at the stake; the *mayz* people were chased and gutted for their gold, which was never found. The Moon wept with great sorrow, for the Moon knew that the Sun had spread these terrible rumours.

My family immigrated to Philadelphia in the early 20th century. My family was fleeing pogroms and anti-semitism. My family arrived to a place and a time where there had already been centuries of removal and displacement. And my family bought land in and continues to pay taxes to a state created by the removal of indigenous people through violence, intimidation, unjust and immoral economic and government decisions. We live on and profit from stolen land.

How do I repair a wound that is so much bigger than me and my own actions? How do I understand myself in relationship to harm of centuries?

For the sin that we have sinned before You by refusing to admit the harm that is still being perpetrated:

For the sin that we have sinned before You by continuing to live on stolen land.

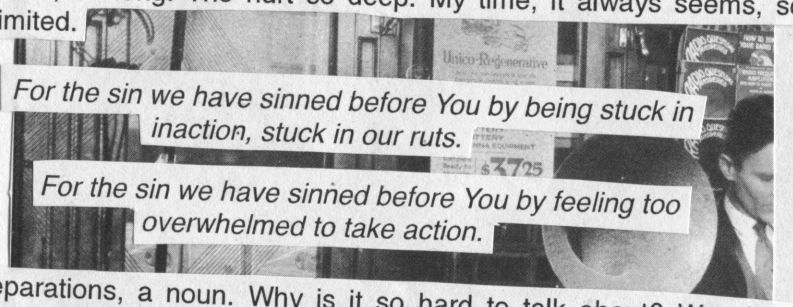
For the sin that we have sinned before You by buying and selling land as if we owned it.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by not acknowledging the history of the land we are on and our relationship to it.

In the Al Chet prayer, we list a mix of kinds of sins. My teacher, Rabbi Vivie Mayer, taught me to look for the *action* sins and the *state of being* sins. Action: we sin before you by wronging a neighbor, by foolish speech, these things we do, that we do wrong, again and again. State of being: we sin unwittingly, confused, willfully, arrogantly. How do we understand the action of living on stolen land, stolen so, so long ago, impossible to find the original thieves? Where else would I live? How could I possibly categorize what my own ancestors did, coming to safety and seeking a better life for their family, as a wrongdoing? Maybe, then, my wrongdoing is all state of being:

For the sin we have sinned before You unknowingly.
For the sin we have sinned before You in complicity
For the sin we have sinned before You unwittingly, confused, arrogantly, unsure of any other way to be.

Teshuvah, Tfillah, Tzedkah. Just when the listing an the chest beating gets overwhelming, we are given a path out: *Teshuvah. Tfillah. Tzedakah.* Make amends, offer prayers, give righteously. This is one part of the Mahzor I have no problem with, this very old formula still works extremely well for me. The question I have every year is not what to do, but where, and how? The list of sins is so, so long. The hurt so deep. My time, it always seems, so limited.



For the sin we have sinned before You by being stuck in inaction, stuck in our ruts.

For the sin we have sinned before You by feeling too overwhelmed to take action.

Reparations, a noun. Why is it so hard to talk about? We give away money all the time, we call it tzedakah, we love to talk about it. Why am I afraid to tell you about reparations? Tzedakah, we are proud to say, is not about charity, or not just about charity, it is about justice. We can focus our giving not just on what we like, what feels good, but we are forced to ask, what is the justice that is needed in the world? How can money that I move make for more justice in the world?

Reparations, making repairs, requires us to look at what is broken. Reparations asks us to look at, and to ask, what have we broken that we need to repair?

For the sins that we have sinned before You by breaking so many things.

For the sins that we have sinned before You by refusing to look at what we have broken.

For the sins that we have sinned before You by inheriting broken things and pretending they are not broken.

For the sins that we have sinned before You by breaking things that are already broken.

allies are doing; engage in internal/self-education; create space alongside regular community circles for ongoing internal education; prepare yourself for action and be available if Indigenous folk choose to call on you as a resource; and offer material support (i.e. funds) to Indigenous organizers. You can also connect with your own roots and ancestors as one more way to resist colonial assimilation.

For the authors of this piece, living in Toronto in a centre for the Canadian state, we have connected with an initiative called the River Run. The River Run is a biannual event that brings community members from Grassy Narrows First Nation in Northwestern Ontario to Toronto for press releases, speaking events and a large rally and march. The River Run events are organized by a collection of people in Toronto, following directions from community members in Grassy Narrows. For more information about Grassy Narrows and the River Run, please visit www.freegrass.net.

When we think of working in solidarity with Indigenous peoples, we can consider that tzedakah is a responsibility to show up. Solidarity can take many forms. Your work will look different, depending on the needs of your communities, the communities you are working in solidarity with, your place, your relationships, and your capacity. When we re-conceptualize tzedakah and tikkun olam as a duty, rather than charity and generosity, tzedakah becomes a daily commitment to action.

The Authors:

Sterling Stutz is an Ashkenazi Jew from Toronto. She spends a lot of her time working with children and is currently studying Environmental and Health Studies and French. Sterling is a member of the Movement Defence Committee and helped to organize the 2016 Grassy Narrows River Run in Toronto. For more information about the #FreeGrassy Campaign & River Run please visit www.freegrassy.net

Emily Green is a queer Ashkenazi Jewish activist. She bartends, and works in the kitchen of a refugee shelter. Emily helps to organize a monthly Shabbat potluck series called Grassroots Shabbat, and helps to coordinate Rosh Chodesh gatherings. Emily visited the Grassy Narrows First Nations community in 2013 when she co-led a delegation with the Christian Peacemaker Team-Indigenous Solidarity Team, and she has been committed to solidarity with this community since; this was her second time organizing with the River Run initiative.

revealed that the fish in the Grassy Narrows' river contained dangerous levels of mercury. It was discovered that a paper mill in Dryden, Ontario dumped 20 thousand pounds of mercury into the river system, causing severe devastation. For context, according to the U.S. National Resource Centre, a one pound spill necessitates a mandatory evacuation. The Grassy Narrows community have been forced to deal with the loss of their traditional economy, unemployment, and a mysterious new ailment that continues to be rampant among members of their community--mercury poisoning.

As Jews working to support Indigenous land defence and self-determination, turning to the Torah for Jewish perspectives can be grounding for our work in environmental justice:

"When a person lets their livestock loose to graze in another's land, and so allows a field or vineyard to be grazed bare, they must make restitution for the impairment of that field or vineyard." Exodus 22:4

This line shows us that not only do we, as Jewish people and settlers on this land, have a responsibility to social justice, but to environmental justice and restoration as well. Tikkun olam echoes this thought when it reminds that we all must leave the world better for having been a part of it. Tzedakah, often thought to mean charity in modern times, actually comes from the root word Tzadei-Dalet-Qof, meaning justice or fairness. In Jewish law, tzedakah is a duty, not a choice. We do not have the ability to choose when to pursue justice: Jewish law tells us that it is always our responsibility to confront injustices, for people and the Earth.

In the spirit of both tikkun olam and Indigenous solidarity, we hope that you will inform yourself and pursue justice in solidarity with Indigenous communities in the places that you call home. Solidarity can look like many things and is essentially grounded in relationships: relationships with other allies, with organizations, and with Indigenous people--whether personal relationships or through ally networks. In the sourcebook by Unsettling Minnesota, "Unsettling Ourselves: Reflections and Resources for Deconstructing Colonial Mentality," there are many suggestions for what being in solidarity tangibly looks like, including: start by having conversations with your friends and community; create literature, zines, and share articles on social media; create workshops about colonization and allyship; plug into what other

What Does Justice Look Like? could also be the subtitle of the Mahzor. Teshuva starts with acknowledging the wrongdoing. By naming it. There are other steps, but as far as liturgy goes, naming the wrongdoing is the main tool in our toolbox. Yes, we are supposed to find ways to repair the damage, but we rarely do that negotiation during services. Yes, we are supposed to commit to never sinning that sin again, but there's no way to guarantee that today. The main activity of the Mahzor, that we do here together, is to get us to name the sin.

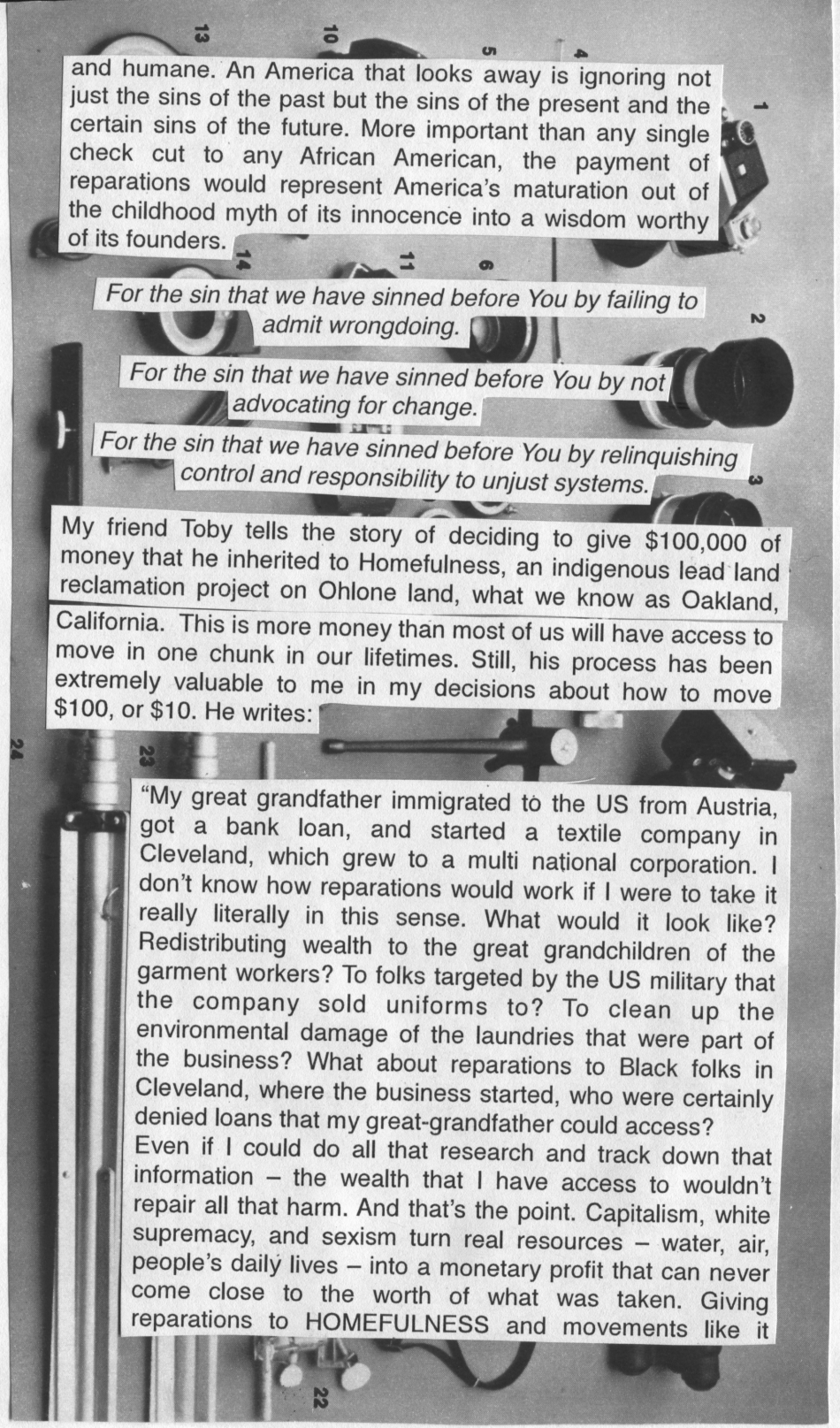
In the Avodah service this afternoon we will remember and reenact the ancient, Temple times way of asking for forgiveness; we will tell of burnt offerings, the scape-goat ritual, special liturgical pronunciation of The Name of Hashem, and full prostrations to embody humility at the throne of the King of Kings. We don't have ways to make repairs to God like that anymore, we just make lists. Maybe that is why we do it so many times, over and over again, throughout the ay. Standing, beating our chests, naming sin after sin, even those we're sure we didn't commit, eve n those we are sure we will commit again. A desperate naming.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by failing to admit wrongdoing.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by listing the same things, year after year, and taking no action.

In his 2014 article, "A Case for Reparations" Ta-Nehisi Coates breaks down in detail how "250 years of slavery. 90 years of Jim Crow. 60 years of separate by equal. 35 years of state sanctioned red-lining." creates the moral and economic necessity for the U.S. government and institutions to make reparations to black Americans. "Until we reckon with the compounding moral debts of our ancestors," he writes, "America will never be whole." There are state and federal bills that a very few legislators have tried, for years, to bring forward. They rarely get a hearing. Coates writes:

> No one can know what would come out of such a debate. Perhaps no number can fully capture the multi-century plunder of black people in America. Perhaps the number is so large that it can't be imagined, let alone calculated and dispensed. But I believe that wrestling publicly with these questions matters as much as—if not more than—the specific answers that might be produced. An America that asks what it owes its most vulnerable citizens is improved



and humane. An America that looks away is ignoring not just the sins of the past but the sins of the present and the certain sins of the future. More important than any single check cut to any African American, the payment of reparations would represent America's maturation out of the childhood myth of its innocence into a wisdom worthy of its founders.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by failing to admit wrongdoing.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by not advocating for change.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by relinquishing control and responsibility to unjust systems.

My friend Toby tells the story of deciding to give $100,000 of money that he inherited to Homefulness, an indigenous lead land reclamation project on Ohlone land, what we know as Oakland, California. This is more money than most of us will have access to move in one chunk in our lifetimes. Still, his process has been extremely valuable to me in my decisions about how to move $100, or $10. He writes:

"My great grandfather immigrated to the US from Austria, got a bank loan, and started a textile company in Cleveland, which grew to a multi national corporation. I don't know how reparations would work if I were to take it really literally in this sense. What would it look like? Redistributing wealth to the great grandchildren of the garment workers? To folks targeted by the US military that the company sold uniforms to? To clean up the environmental damage of the laundries that were part of the business? What about reparations to Black folks in Cleveland, where the business started, who were certainly denied loans that my great-grandfather could access?
Even if I could do all that research and track down that information – the wealth that I have access to wouldn't repair all that harm. And that's the point. Capitalism, white supremacy, and sexism turn real resources – water, air, people's daily lives – into a monetary profit that can never come close to the worth of what was taken. Giving reparations to HOMEFULNESS and movements like it

As we work to understand the histories of colonialism on the lands we inhabit, visit, and farm, a crucial first step is to learn and know whose lands we are on. In offering the above history of Toronto, we invite you to learn the history of the place you call home.

One resource we have found is the website http://native-land.ca. Although this knowledge does not offer concrete steps in addressing and undoing colonialism, it does actively seek to undo the narrative that the history of North America began when European settlers arrived.

You may be thinking, "My family wasn't part of colonization. They came here for refuge, so how could I be responsible for reconciliation?" Colonization is not a relic of the past. It has changed throughout the course of history and continues to the present day. Though smallpox blankets are no longer distributed and the last Canadian Residential School closed in 1996, colonial violence continues. there are estimates of up to 4000 missing and murdered Indigenous women across Canada; Indigenous peoples are incarcerated in Canada at astoundingly high rates with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit comprising 3.8% of the Canadian population yet comprising 23.2% of the total inmate population; the on-reserve child welfare system receives up to 38% less funding than elsewhere in Canada. Meanwhile; coal, oil, shale, water and other natural elements of the Earth continue to be extracted to power unsustainable consumer life and to fill the coffers of large corporations. (Please note, this is not nearly a full list of the ways that colonialism continues to function in today's society, it is merely a beginning place to offer some perspective).

Today, all settlers in North America are living on colonized and largely unceded land. This truth underlies the Canadian state's historic and contemporary structure of power. Our living here, and use of this land, actively dispossesses others from their traditional and historical land, to this day. As Jewish people, living in North America, we are participating in ongoing colonialism. The public purse is lined with the profits made off of the plundered elements of the Earth. This extraction often happens without the consent of the Indigenous communities, and they rarely see any benefits.

In our current solidarity work, our attention is brought to Grassy Narrows First Nations, the Anishinaabe community in Northwestern Ontario where many are fighting against clearcut logging and battling mercury poisoning. In the 1970s, it was

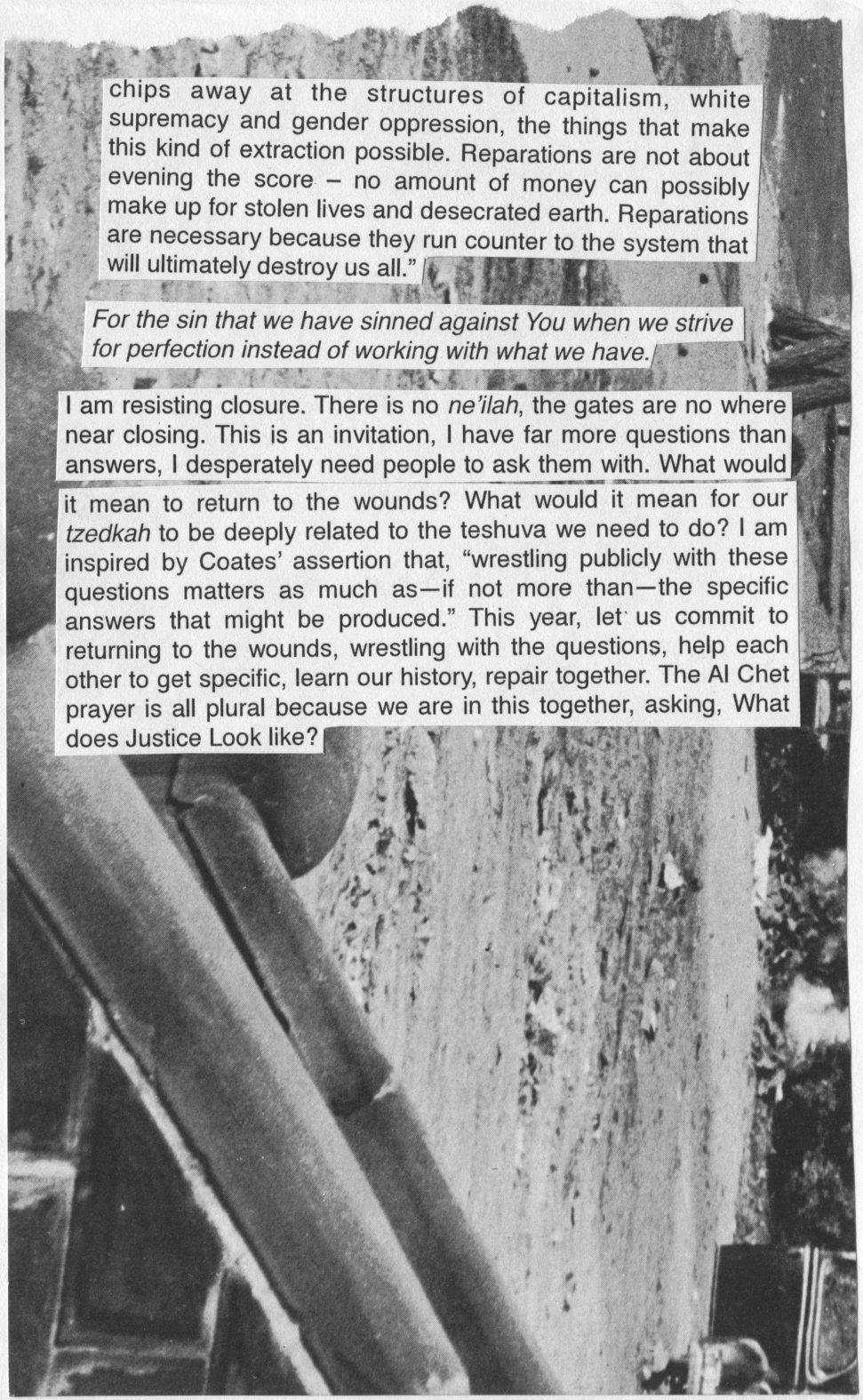
Connecting Tzedakah, Tikkun Olam, and Indigenous Solidarity
Emily Green and Sterling Stutz

As you walk through the city streets of your home-place do you ever think back to the time that your family immigrated there? Did they arrive by ship, train, car, or perhaps by plane? Did they come as refugees? Did they come seeking a better, safer home? As you walk your city streets do you ever think back to a time before there were streets, before the water was undrinkable, before there were migrants from around the globe living there?

This continent, so-called North America, has been inhabited for millennia by Indigenous peoples--a broad term that refers to the original inhabitants of this land and encompasses hundreds of diverse communities who speak hundreds of different languages. Indigenous peoples continue to live here: on their traditional lands, as well as on lands to which they have been forcibly relocated, and in urban centers like Toronto. The story of the forced displacement of Grassy Narrows First Nation and neighbouring First Nations communities in the 60s by Indian Affairs Canada is recounted in this piece by Grassy resident Ivy Keewatin.

Writing in Toronto, land that traditionally belonged to the Anishinaabe, Huron-Wendat and Mississauga of the New Credit, it is important that we stop to take into consideration the history of the land, and the impacts that history continues to have today.

"Toronto comes from the word tkaronto, which is Mohawk for 'where the trees are standing in the water.' The word describes, the narrows, where Anishinabek and Hurons would congregate and create weirs with large wooden stakes to catch fish. Toronto has a rich history of being occupied by several First Nations at various times and in that sense cannot be narrowed down to just one Nation. Today, The Mississaugas of the New Credit is the First Nation acknowledged by local governments, as they had long established settlements--in the territory of what is now known as Toronto--at the time of contact."
-from MUSKRAT Magazine--an on-line Indigenous arts & culture magazine



chips away at the structures of capitalism, white supremacy and gender oppression, the things that make this kind of extraction possible. Reparations are not about evening the score – no amount of money can possibly make up for stolen lives and desecrated earth. Reparations are necessary because they run counter to the system that will ultimately destroy us all."

For the sin that we have sinned against You when we strive for perfection instead of working with what we have.

I am resisting closure. There is no *ne'ilah*, the gates are no where near closing. This is an invitation, I have far more questions than answers, I desperately need people to ask them with. What would it mean to return to the wounds? What would it mean for our *tzedkah* to be deeply related to the teshuva we need to do? I am inspired by Coates' assertion that, "wrestling publicly with these questions matters as much as—if not more than—the specific answers that might be produced." This year, let us commit to returning to the wounds, wrestling with the questions, help each other to get specific, learn our history, repair together. The Al Chet prayer is all plural because we are in this together, asking, What does Justice Look like?

Der Mbul

Mein Yiddishkeit iz a faygl
Nisht a toyb, ober a voron
Di mikve mein muter iz geven in,
aun di mikve ikh iz geven in
iz a nest fun voron.
ikh shvern az ikh bin a toybn,
Ikh bin a sheyne meydle, ober mein
Shnobl iz a andersh forem.

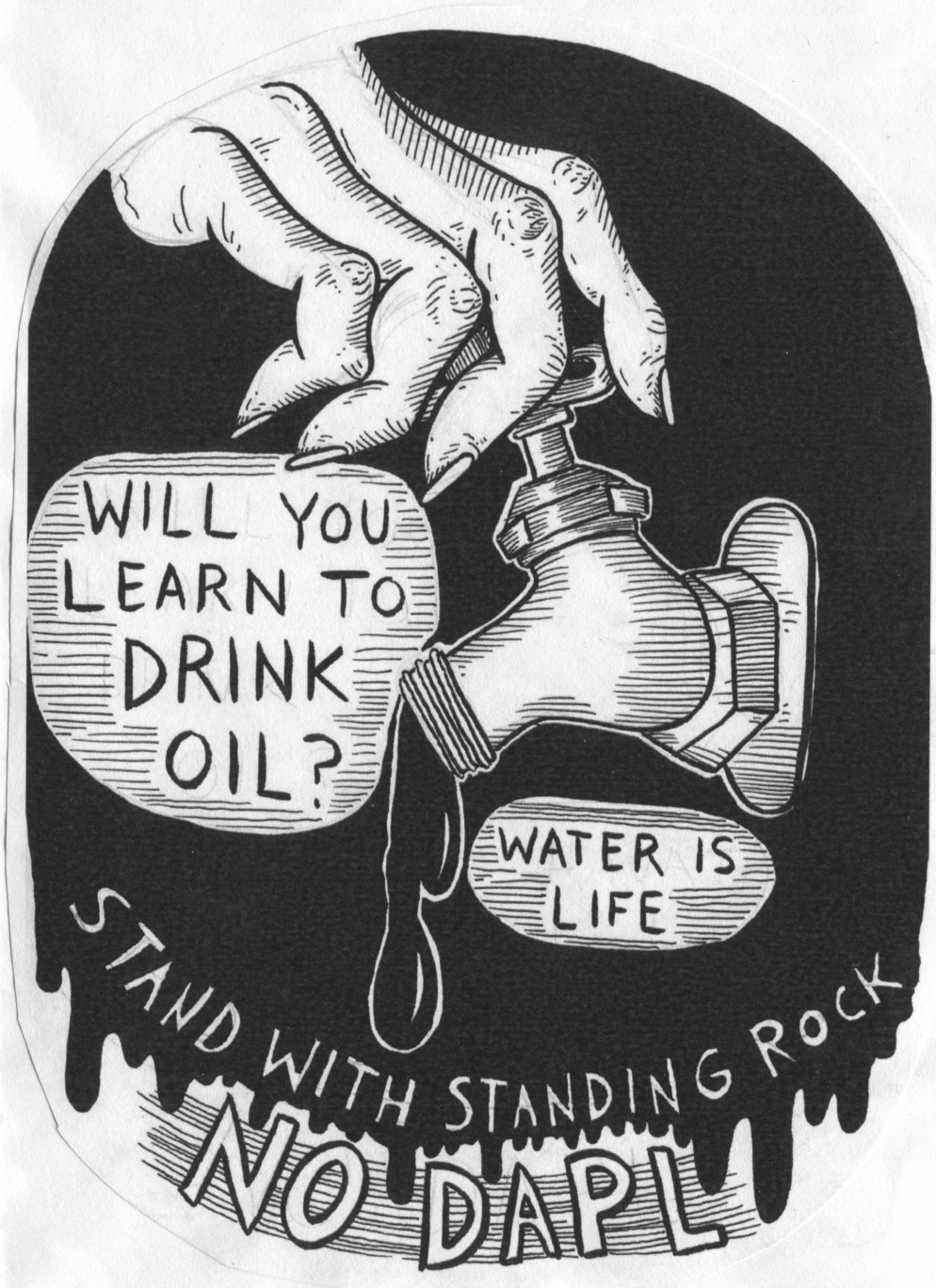
Ikh vel ken tsutik tsu dem orun,
Mit mein fliglen vi fintster vi der im.

The Flood

My *Yiddishkeit* is a bird
Not a dove, but a raven,
The *mikva* I was in, and
the Mikva my mother was in,
Is a raven's nest.
I swear that I am a dove
I am a nice Jewish girl,
But my beak is a different shape

I will come back every time,
With wings as dark as the sea.

(tyler vile)



The steps I have laid out are just the beginning of the journey. I have no doubt that what we read and the people we talk to will shape the direction that we take. It is also important to remember that although we are attempting to address what has happened in the past, colonialism is *ongoing* and that displacement continues to take place today. Also, although our family originally settled in Cape Breton which had specific implications to the Mi'kmaq people, we have dispersed and many of us are currently living in Ontario, affecting the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee people whose land we are on. Although it is by no means comprehensive, what I have sketched out here is a possible pathway forward. By engaging with this work I hope to initiate a way that my family can work towards reconciliation, and begin to change our story for us - here and now- and for future generations.

According to the North Star Fund, "A giving circle is a way to pool your dollars and give to causes you care about in partnership with others. Members give their own gift, raise money from their networks of family and friends, and make decisions together about how to distribute that money in the form of grants. Giving circles also provide social networks, leadership development, peer support, and learning among members." - https://northstarfund.org/donor-activism/act/join-a-giving-circle

יִידישלאַנד: מיט יִידיש גאָרניט פון דעם איז מעגלעך

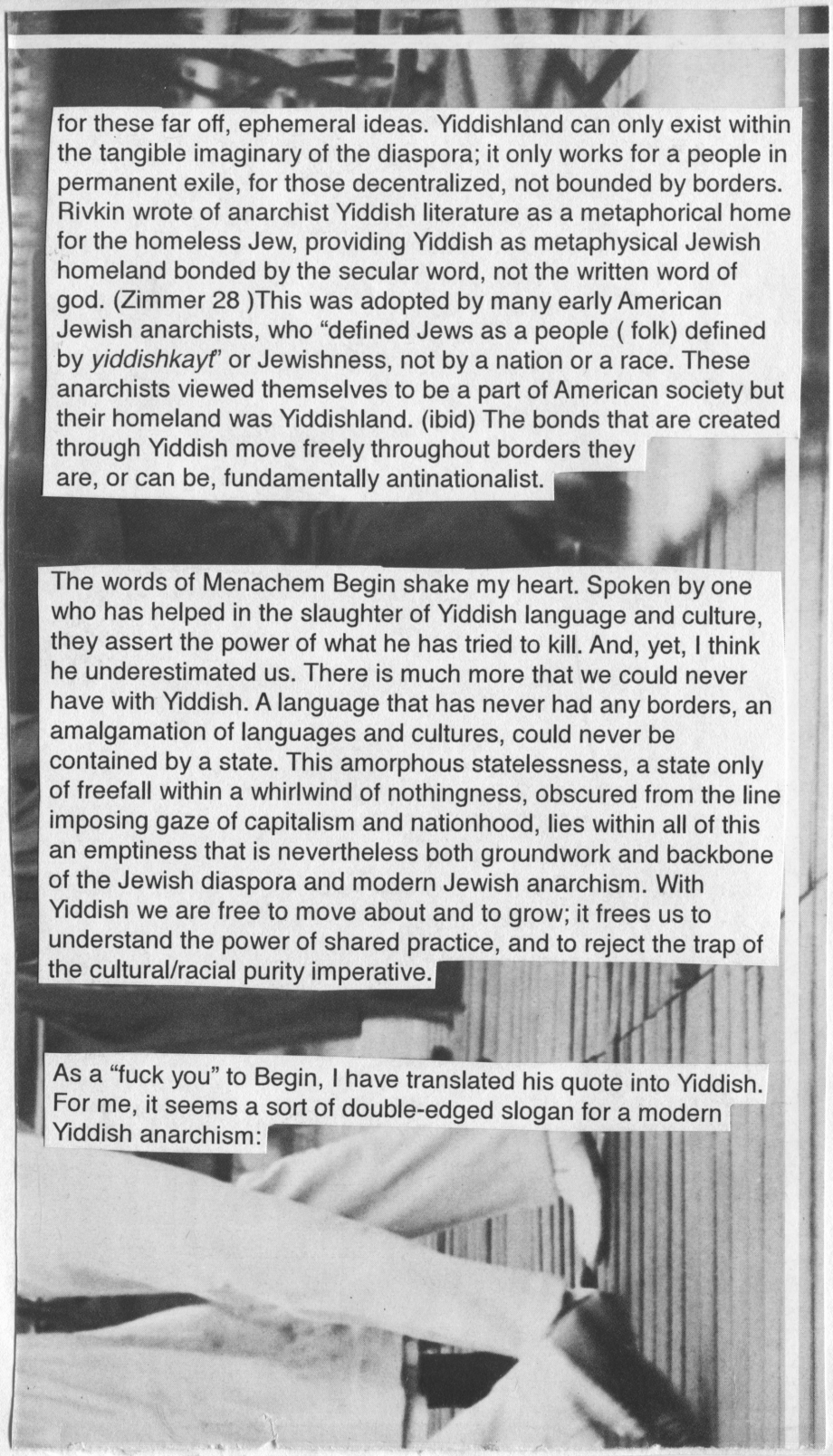
Yiddishland: With Yiddish None of this is Possible

Elijahu Meshunedik

I had great difficulty finding any information about Baruch Rivkin, a Jewish anarchist literary critic who wrote for two of the most successful anarchist newspapers of the 19th and 20th centuries, The *Arbeter Fraynd* (דִי אַרבעטער פרַיינד , "The Worker's Friend") and the *Fraye Arbeter Shtime* (פריִי אַרבעטער שטימי , "Free Worker's Voice".) I could only find a brief mention of his work in a graphic novel, *Yiddishkeit*; I picked it up when I felt lost about writing this essay. I opened the book to a chapter entitled "Yiddishland."Those few pages told me a great deal about Rivkin's work as a critic, and, more importantly, his thoughts and desires around Yiddish, the diaspora, and anarchism, a desire so like my own. It is a terrible shame that he has become so unknown. But, as I have done this work, I have become familiar with the experience of feeling lost for words, lost for history... and so even the way in which Rivkin has been "lost" by history resonates.

In his writing, Rivkin proposed a "Yiddishland": a cooperative, diverse, anarchistic, egalitarian society. Because Yiddish has never been associated with a country or a military, it is a perfect language around which to form a borderless, antiwar society; for Rivkin, Yiddish was the centerpiece to an anarchist future. (Pekar & Buhle) This framing around Yiddish is even supported by the words of its enemies. As I presented in a previous essay, the former Prime Minister of Israel, Menachem Begin, once angrily defended Israel's attempt to ban Yiddish: "With Yiddish we could have not created any navy; with Yiddish, we could have no army; with Yiddish, we could not defend ourselves with powerful jet planes; with Yiddish we would be nothing. We would be like animals!" (Weinstein 127) Precisely.

Rivkin's Yiddishland is not a real place. It is not a country and it is not meant to be. It has never had a flag, it is purely antinationalist. It is distant and ephemeral. In both my search for Rivkin and my own desires for Jewish anarchism, I find myself grasping at the air



for these far off, ephemeral ideas. Yiddishland can only exist within the tangible imaginary of the diaspora; it only works for a people in permanent exile, for those decentralized, not bounded by borders. Rivkin wrote of anarchist Yiddish literature as a metaphorical home for the homeless Jew, providing Yiddish as metaphysical Jewish homeland bonded by the secular word, not the written word of god. (Zimmer 28)This was adopted by many early American Jewish anarchists, who "defined Jews as a people (folk) defined by *yiddishkayt*" or Jewishness, not by a nation or a race. These anarchists viewed themselves to be a part of American society but their homeland was Yiddishland. (ibid) The bonds that are created through Yiddish move freely throughout borders they are, or can be, fundamentally antinationalist.

The words of Menachem Begin shake my heart. Spoken by one who has helped in the slaughter of Yiddish language and culture, they assert the power of what he has tried to kill. And, yet, I think he underestimated us. There is much more that we could never have with Yiddish. A language that has never had any borders, an amalgamation of languages and cultures, could never be contained by a state. This amorphous statelessness, a state only of freefall within a whirlwind of nothingness, obscured from the line imposing gaze of capitalism and nationhood, lies within all of this an emptiness that is nevertheless both groundwork and backbone of the Jewish diaspora and modern Jewish anarchism. With Yiddish we are free to move about and to grow; it frees us to understand the power of shared practice, and to reject the trap of the cultural/racial purity imperative.

As a "fuck you" to Begin, I have translated his quote into Yiddish. For me, it seems a sort of double-edged slogan for a modern Yiddish anarchism:

Tuma suggested two organizations that would be appropriate for us to discuss reconciliation with, the Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn Negotiation Office and the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources. The Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn Negotiation Office is the body that coordinates the Mi'kmaq side of the "made in Nova Scotia" land claims and compensation negotiation process which was established by the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Framework Agreement of 2007. The Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn Negotiation Office is currently engaging in research to show how and when the Mi'kmaq traditional lands were taken away from them and to prove that it was a deliberate, conscious process. The Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources is an organization that works on research and providing scholarships for study of traditional Mi'kmaw knowledge/understanding of nature and management of natural resources. Tuma suggested that after deciding what reconciliation might be appropriate, a friend of his who works at UNIR would be a good person to create a reconciliation ceremony for us. After reviewing this information, my cousin and I decided that our next steps would involve obtaining the petition from Rosemary's mother to give to The Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn Negotiation Office and to get in touch with both organizations that Tuma suggested. We would also like to learn more about our family history, deepen our understandings of the treaties, and learn more about reconciliation/reparations models. After doing this preliminary research, Rosemary and I are interested in gathering members of our family together to present the information we have learned. We would like the learning to be ongoing, and are interested in multiple meetings and educational sessions - perhaps some of which are led by Indigenous facilitators that we will pay- so that we can engage our family in a deep learning process. From this learning we hope to inspire conversations and action around tithing and monetary reparations, perhaps internally fundraising family members in a giving circle[1] model to collectively be ongoing, yearly donors to the Mi'kmaq organizations Tuma suggested. Rosemary and I are also interested in going to Cape Breton when we can, to meet with the local contacts we have there, meet with the organizations, and perhaps one day participate in a reconciliation ceremony.

colonialism, and that my family continues to accrue wealth within and through systems of white supremacy and colonization. This is my inheritance from approximately seven generations ago. Knowing this, my question becomes - do I want the next seven generations of family coming after me to inherit a legacy of unreconciled violence, or do I want them to inherit a world where the Two Row Wampum treaty (a foundational treaty made between Indigenous people and European Settlers in Canada/The US/Turtle Island) is upheld, and Settler and Indigenous people live side-by side in peace and in friendship? Although my nuclear and extended family does not have a surplus of millions of dollars, I do still think that we, as settlers, have a role to play in reparations and reconciliation work. I also do not think money on its own will solve the problem, nor can we put a retroactive price-value on suffering. I am learning from my friends - settler and Indigenous alike - that reconciliation is a way of life, with no fixed end date. Despite the enormity of the task, I am interested in beginning somewhere. As such, I have begun to work on a model, with my cousin Rosemary, for settler families to engage in reparative actions with Indigenous communities that addresses the economic inequities caused by colonialism. The larger question for us, of course, is how do live in reconciliatory ways? To begin our project, we reached out to a relative Anne who is an activist, lives in Nova Scotia, and has connections to Indigenous leaders in Unama'ki. Anne's first idea was to contact her friend Elder Isabelle Knockwood who was actively involved in the American Indian Movement which was formed to address issues of indigenous sovereignty, treaty issues, police harassment and racism. Anne explained to us that connecting with Isabelle would have to be traditional and we would need to visit her with tobacco on the reserve. Anne felt confident we could actually find the families that were displaced by the MacAdams as it is probable that it would be in the oral culture of the Mi'kmaq reserve at Bras D'Or. Anne also spoke with Tuma Young who is a Two-Spirit lawyer (the first fluent speaker of Mi'kmaw'isimk to be admitted to the bar) and professor at Cape Breton University. Anne and Tuma spoke about what reconciliation actions might be appropriate in the light of the letter Ruth found in the Nova Scotia Archives where our family had participated in a petition to the government to have the Mikmaq removed from part of the shore of the Bras DOr Lakes. Anne explained to us that

" מיט ייִדיש מיר קענען ניט באַשאַפן קיין יאַם-פלאָט;
מיט ייִדיש מיר קענען האָבן ניט קיין
אַרמיי; מיט ייִדיש מיר קענען ניט פארטיידיקן זיך מיר
אַליין מיט מאכטיק דזשעט
אַעראָפּלאַנען; מיט ייִדיש מיר וואָלט זיינען גאָרנישט.
מיר וואָלט זיינען חיהות "
"Mit yiddish mir kenen nit bashafn keyn yamplot;
mit yiddish mir kenen hobn keyn armey; mit
yiddish mir kenen nit farteydikn zikh mir aleyn mit makhtik djet
aeroplanen; mit yiddish mir volt
zaynen gornisht. Mir volt zaynen khayes."

Changing the Story: A Family Reparations Project

Hannah Forman

"The foundational basis for any relationship is an exchange of stories."
-Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall

My story about decolonization begins with a story about family. I recently finished a Master's degree in Social Justice Education at the University of Toronto where I focused on decolonization. In all of my classes - from "Indigenous Research Methodologies" to "Decolonizing Education" - the basic lesson was the same; to engage in decolonizing work, you need to know where you come from and you need to know the land you're on. As a Jew it's confusing to answer the first question, because although I do know my family on my father's side was in Russia for a while, I don't know where they were before that, and I do know they were marginalized and not at "home" there. My family on my mother's side is not Jewish, however, and is easier to trace back to Scotland and Ireland. These questions that I was carrying in grad school about family history also aligned with the questions I wanted to answer for a Resource Generation conference, "Making Money Make Change" I attended last November. MMMC is an annual gathering intended to bring young people with class privilege and wealth from across the US (plus a couple of us Canadians) together to engage in wealth redistribution and economic justice solidarity work. Storytelling is a central organizing strategy used at these conferences, and participants were asked to prepare short "money stories" about where the wealth in our families came from. While the money in my family is not close to that of the majority of those in Resource Generation, preparing my "money story" for the conference led me to learn about my own family history- a history of settlers- for the first time and understand how it relates to the wider context of the white supremacist capitalist colonialist hetero-patriarchy in which we live. As one of the legacies of colonialism is disconnection- disconnection from ourselves, from each other, from land, and from where we come from- for me learning about my family history- fraught as it is- is a gift, and it is this gift that catalyzes my desire to engage in the work of family reparations. Also, although the reparations work I seek to do is with the non-Jewish side of my

family, it is my deep Jewish heritage from my father's side rooted in an ethic of "tikkun olam" that bolsters my commitment to social justice work, even when it is hard.

To learn about my family history before the conference, I called my cousin Rosemary to talk to her mother, Ruth. From this call I learned that the ancestors on my mother's side fled the Highlands of Scotland in 1790 because they faced persecution and forced conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism by the British. They settled in Unama'ki ("Cape Breton" in English) and turned from the persecuted into the colonizers (a cycle of violence story which to me has some parallels to Jews settling in Israel and displacing Palestinians.) Ruth also mentioned that in her family ancestry research project, she came across an official document signed by a relative of mine, around seven generations ago, petitioning the Canadian government to forcibly remove the Mi'kmaq people, who were Indigenous to Unama'ki, from the better, fertile land so my family could set up their farm. The point of money stories is for young people who come from privilege to learn how to connect the dots in their own family histories that account for the accrual of wealth. This is an act of resistance against the dominant, whitewashed narratives that "things have always been this way." Looking at our family money through a historical lens re-establishes links and denaturalizes privilege. Act understanding our legacy as settlers renders our relationship to our environment more immediate- we didn't just "end up" here, we came here - specific people at a specific time. The wealth accrued over generations from the stolen land on Unama'ki allowed for many of my relatives, including my mother, to pursue well-paid professional careers predominantly in the medical and legal sectors. In a family history that Ruth authored, she writes (I added the parenthesis): "Presumably he (My great grandfather Colin) was able to afford this (the general store) by selling the family farm in West River (Mikmaq territory) that he had inherited from his father the year before." I also read in our family history that as a newborn, my great great grandmother Ellen was kidnapped by a group of Mikmaq people and held for ransom for a list of supplies including shovels and axes. Whether this story- which depicts the depths of economic inequity that shaped Indigenous-Settler relations at the time- is entirely factually accurate or not, what is true is that my family displaced Mi'kmaq people, that the Mi'kmaq people suffered and continue to suffer greatly as a result of